

Always on Call: Microsoft Office 365

Leaders in Healthcare IT Embrace the Cloud

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME), the premier professional association for healthcare CIOs, paves the way to the cloud. Learn how Office 365, the first productivity stack of its kind, successfully connects and raises the bar for top healthcare executives.



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A Look at Microsoft Office 365

AT Connection our experts agree that Office 365 is in a class by itself. More than merely a different way of licensing, it's a different way of deploying and consuming technologies. Office 365 brings you cloud-powered connection, collaboration, and control. And because Office 365 is powered by the cloud, you can get to your applications and files from virtually anywhere and receive automatic updates. As the first cloud-enabled productivity stack of its kind, best practices for deployment are still evolving, so it's important to cut through the hype about barriers, strategies, and risks during any assessment.

One of the biggest misconceptions is to think of Office 365 as just an "Office in the cloud," but Office 365 is a complete package, and that package varies significantly. The Office component and the core applications—Word, PowerPoint, and Excel—are still installed on a computer. Users still compute these locally, but there is a choice with Exchange for email, Lync, and SharePoint. These can be deployed in the cloud or on-premises. Office 365 does essentially become "your office in the cloud," and access to data from anywhere is one of its biggest selling points. The promise of increased productivity is possible because it allows users to work anywhere. As a subscription-based, user-based model, it's a departure from traditional industry practices. The ability over time to remain on-premises or go to the cloud at any point in between is the primary appeal of the Office 365 licensing solution.

Considerations

To move successfully to Office 365, a number of factors come into play. Organizations often solicit third party assistance in making a thorough evaluation of when to move and how best to get there. For example, with this vastly different way of consuming software, end users need online accounts. Sometimes those accounts need to be federated

with your Active Directory for single sign-on. The deployment options should be explored to find the best fit, including Microsoft's new Click-to-Run technology. Costs are also an important factor. With the deals and incentives, upfront pricing may seem too good to pass up. It's important to also consider long-term costs. Another critical area is security. While users will enjoy access to data anywhere and anytime, organizational data will sit on a device that internal security administrators don't control. It's best to examine if any safeguards are built into the endpoint. Organizations also need a comprehensive licensing strategy to go with the Office 365 technology strategy. Office 365 is on-premise and cloud with flexibility to decide which pieces to deploy, where, and when. Along with this flexibility comes the need to understand new licensing agreements with a multi-year course.

Connection knows every inch of this vast arena and is well aware of the technology and infrastructure impact as well as the cornerstones that should shape today's decision making.

Use Case

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) is determined to move the industry toward a transformative, digitized, healthcare system where better care at lower cost and higher quality is the new standard.

CHIME is recognized as a trusted resource, trusted leader, and a go-to organization with regard to technology for the healthcare environment. As such, the CHIME leaders recognize the need for the proper tools and solutions to support any such transformation.

The organization has traditional office space as well as employees across the country with the need to access databases, share documents, coordinate schedules, and more. With membership quickly approaching more than 1,500 worldwide, the organization admitted that its technology infrastructure was severely outdated.

In the last couple years, our team was fighting technology rather than leveraging technology.

Keith Fraidenburg, MBA, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer

Goal

CHIME wanted a technology refresh with no servers on-site and no need for a full-time technical support person. The staff also needed to be on the same platform with the same versions of Windows and Outlook. They wanted a worry-free licensing scenario that eliminated the need to manage software updates. There was a strong desire to move from client-based infrastructure to cloud-based and employ a solution that would scale to their growing, decentralized organization.

If we're going to be a leading IT association serving leading IT executives, then we should be out in the forefront. We should be walking the walk.

Keith Fraidenburg, MBA, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer

Situation Overview

CHIME enlisted the advice of Connection to assess the organization's readiness for Office 365 and how to optimize the environment. In order to attract and retain talented, experienced employees to its growing team, CHIME needed a hassle-free remote work environment for all staff. The existing email infrastructure did not perform up to par and would not be able to support the pending user growth. In addition, basic infrastructure issues, such as bandwidth and mobility, required attention. And CHIME wanted a solution that reduced the need for internal support staff.

Office 365 offered the necessary tools, addressed the flexibility, and eliminated the traditional hardware and software management ritual. The specific tools would help drive collaboration, sharing

of documents, and easy access to email without dialing in and VPNs. In addition, the cost was deemed a reasonable expense given budget constraints.

We had a wonderful partnership with Connection. We went through the proof of concept, they helped us determine that this was the right product for us, and they held our hands through the whole migration.

Susan Aldrich, Vice President and Chief of Staff

The Process

Connection engaged other key customers as reference sites who demonstrated that for 20–20,000 employees, the solution was scalable and would work for CHIME throughout anticipated growth. With automatic updates and support for mobile workers across the globe, the full Office 365 suite met the cloud-based, minimal maintenance, and support criteria without fail.

We moved from proof of concept to piloting with a few of our key staff in a fairly quick process.

Russ Branzell, CEO and President of CHIME

Results

CHIME credits a “hardcore cost/benefit analysis” that uncovered a dramatic opportunity for cost reduction throughout their infrastructure. The effort yielded savings in the six-figure range, advanced their technology posture, and equipped the team with the most current tools. This includes the savings from IT support staff investments as well. Qualitative results include a significant reduction in frustration among users with regard to email and collaboration tools. The organization is now positioned with technology equivalent to—or better than—its board executives who represent health information technology leaders in the industry. According to Fraidenburg, Exchange online and the Office 365 applications worked as expected every time. He reports that the team now has

more time to support the organization, the mission, and its members.

I used Connection a lot in my previous career as a CIO and a CEO in healthcare; I've always had great trust in them. I highly recommend Connection as an organization that knows how to do this and do this well.

Russ Branzell, CEO and President of CHIME

The Impact for Healthcare

As thought leaders, CHIME intends this use case to be a catalyst in the industry and an opportunity to remove numerous costs and complexity from the activities of member executives. CHIME intends to encourage the industry to be innovative and create some revolutionary change—it's time to get out of the old-style habit of where every piece of technology must be managed internally. CHIME participants advocate the end of internal technology control, to be replaced with simply an Internet signal, reliable security, and cloud-based solutions that shed management concerns.

Office 365 is an incredible platform and the team at Connection finds great merit in its claims. We can help you take a careful look at the entire picture: the impact on your infrastructure, security, and end-users. And don't hesitate to call on our in-house team of Microsoft experts to help you make the move.

Microsoft Licensing Optimization (MLO) Foundation

Connection is well recognized for its Microsoft Licensing Optimization (MLO) process, which helps ensure you have the right pricing and terms. Now we've extended that expertise to help you make a sound Office 365 investment decision backed by data, experience, and industry best practices.

Just as important as licensing is how Office 365 actually “works” throughout your infrastructure. To ensure success

with Office 365 we can perform Readiness Assessments, evaluate your Active Directory, and help you identify and mitigate roadblocks. The complimentary Office 365 Readiness Assessment online tool takes just a few minutes and provides a profile of your environment. Then we bring creative thinking, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of Microsoft technology, business, and financial considerations to the engagement.

Online Office 365 Readiness Assessment Tool

www.connection.com/office365assessment

Customers rely on our team for continuous support. Once the readiness plan is underway—after deployment and migration start to happen—our large staff of service specialists can help with everything from email and SharePoint to Lync and Active Directory. For every issue related to deployment, we can help you plan, execute, and manage your Microsoft investment.

A Trusted Partner

As a leading National Technology Solutions Provider, we've been trusted for 35 years to connect people with technology that enhances growth, elevates productivity, and empowers innovation. Connection stands ready to deliver, install, and maintain technology nationwide by leveraging our internal professional services expertise and top-tier vendor partnerships.

Healthcare professionals like you turn to us as a trusted advisor with solutions for their most pressing needs. Whether you're creating a plan to achieve meaningful use of a certified Electronic Health Record (EHR), quickly positioning your facility to take advantage of stimulus incentives, or expanding your capabilities to efficiently and compassionately treat a growing number of patients, we're here to help every step of the way. Our goal is to help you focus on what you do best—delivering patient care.